

CARL LEVIN
MICHIGAN



United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

June 2, 1997

6/2/97
COMMITTEES
ARMED SERVICES
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
SMALL BUSINESS

149219

Mr. David Ullrich
Acting Administrator
EPA Region V.
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60604-3511

Dear Mr. Ullrich:

Enclosed is correspondence from Ms. Judy Mayo, Chair of the Kalamazoo Environmental Council in Kalamazoo, Michigan. There is some disagreement about an appropriate clean-up method for the site to which Ms. Mayo refers. I would appreciate you looking into this matter and providing me with a status report.

The disposition of this site has been pending for too long and a prompt resolution is needed. Please let me know if I can be of assistance with the state agencies. Also, please address your reply, to Carmen Oviedo of my staff. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Carl Levin
United States Senator

CL/cc
Enclosure



Kalamazoo Environmental Council

A Coalition of Kalamazoo Area Environmental Organizations¹

P.O. Box 127 • Kalamazoo, MI • 49004-0127

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5 May 1997

Senator Carl Levin
United States Senate
Senate Russell Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Levin,

Please find enclosed a letter to Russell Harding, Executive Director of the MI Department of Environmental Quality, from the Kalamazoo Environmental Council (KEC), a coalition of local environmental organizations in the vicinity of the PCB polluted Kalamazoo River area. The KEC is requesting an emergency cleanup of the Bryant Mill Pond site on Portage Creek. We also sent this letter to Valdas Adamkus, Region V EPA Administrator. As you are aware, the contaminated sediments at this site continue to erode into the waterway, thus contributing to the hazards already associated with the river system and further complicating the cleanup of the river. We are seriously concerned about health effects of PCB pollution on the natural resources and ecology of this area, as well as to humans.

Members of the KEC seek your support in requesting cleanup of the PCB contaminated sediments associated with the Bryant Mill Pond site.

Sincerely,

Judy Mayo,
Chair, Kalamazoo Environmental Council

¹ KEC member organizations: Asylum Lake Preservation Association, Audubon Society of Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo Garden Council, Kalamazoo Nature Center, Kalamazoo River Protection Association, League of Women Voters of the Kalamazoo Area, Sierra Club - Kalamazoo Valley Group



Kalamazoo Environmental Council

A Coalition of Kalamazoo Area Environmental Organizations¹

P.O. Box 127 • Kalamazoo, MI • 49004-0127

5 May, 1997

Mr. Russ Harding, Executive Director
MI Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 30473
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Harding,

I am writing on behalf of the Kalamazoo Environmental Council (KEC) to convey our grave concern about the continuing erosion of PCBs into the Kalamazoo River/Lake Michigan ecosystem from the Bryant Mill Pond operable unit located in the Allied Paper/Portage Creek/Kalamazoo River Superfund Site. We respectfully request emergency cleanup removal measures under the Superfund Law to standards adequate to protect wildlife, the environment and public health and to meet water quality standards. KEC is an association of environmentally active organizations (see list below) and individuals which exists to promote an environment beneficial to life through protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest.

There is no doubt that PCBs pose a hazard to natural ecosystems including humans. Tests on laboratory animals show that PCB exposure can cause cancers, tumors, birth defects, reproductive failures, as well as liver, eye, and gastric tract disorders. Recent research results in Michigan and New York indicate reduced mental abilities of children born to some mothers who ate PCB contaminated fish while pregnant. And **current data from the Kalamazoo River indicate reproductive dysfunction of organisms higher in the food chain where PCBs bioaccumulate due to the stability and lipid solubility of these compounds.**

For the most part, PCB contamination of the river ecosystem occurred long ago due to previous disposal methods used by the paper industry. However, at some sites, including Bryant Mill Pond, **PCBs continue to enter the water through erosion of PCB laden soils.** The difficulties of recovering PCBs out of water are well known. It is also much more costly to clean up PCBs in the water versus those contained in the soil. **Clearly, immediate action is needed to prevent PCB contaminated soils at Bryant Mill Pond from entering the waterway.** PCB levels in Bryant Mill Pond samples taken along the creek average several 100 ppm and many exceed 1000 ppm. This is an extremely high and dangerous level. Cleanup of this site is feasible, methods are available, the technology is known.

The major objective of the Superfund law is to identify and cleanup hazardous sites of pollution. The presence of potentially responsible parties (PRPs) should not cause the cleanup of a dangerous site to move slower than the cleanup at an orphan site. **The officers and delegates of the Kalamazoo Environmental Council urge the DEQ, as the lead agency for the Kalamazoo River Superfund Site, to immediately take the next steps toward implementing an emergency cleanup at the Bryant Mill Pond site to prevent further erosion of PCBs into the river system.** We realize that an emergency cleanup at one site is not a solution to the broader PCB problem in the Kalamazoo River. However, this action will make future remediation of the river much more feasible as it will stop the introduction of additional PCBs into the system.

Sincerely,

Judy Mayo
KEC Chairperson

cc: Valdas Adamkus, EPA Regional Administrator; Scott Cornelius, MDEQ Superfund Program; Al Howard, MDEQ Superfund Program; Gov John Engler; Sen Carl Levin; Sen Spencer Abraham; Rep Fred Upton; Sen Dale Shugars; Rep Donald Gilmer; Rep Ed LaForge; Rep Charles Perricone; Kalamazoo Co. Public Health; Kalamazoo Co. Board of Commissioners; City of Kalamazoo Commissioners; MI Env Council.

¹ KEC member organizations: Asylum Lake Preservation Association, Audubon Society of Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo Garden Council, Kalamazoo Nature Center, Kalamazoo River Protection Association, League of Women Voters of the Kalamazoo Area, Sierra Club - Kalamazoo Valley Group